GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3653
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2016
Heavy School Bags
Reddy Shri Ch. Malla

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that majority of students in schools are carrying heavy weight of their school bags due to heavy books and lunch boxes;
(b) whether lack of an on-campus canteen, which forces children to carry lunch boxes from home and heavy books are some of the reasons a majority of students from unaided schools in the country continue to stagger under the weight of their school bags; and
(c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to frame a detailed set of guidelines and monitor the weight of school bags?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA)

(a) to (c): The Central Government has taken various steps to reduce curriculum load and the weight of school bags. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)has not recommended any textbook for early childhood education. It has recommended only two books (Language and Mathematics) for classes I & II and three books for classes III to IV (Language, Environmental Studies and Mathematics). The number and size of NCERT's textbooks used by the primary and secondary school students are appropriate to their age. NCERT has also made available all their textbooks for free access through the web (epathshala.nic.in) and mobile devices. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has directed schools affiliated to it to ensure that students do not carry school bags till class II and also to restrict the number of books to be prescribed in classes I-VIII. It has also issued a circular in July, 2015 to ensure that the parents are not forced to buy excessive number of textbooks. This issue was deliberated in the meeting of Central Advisory Board on Education held on 19th August, 2015 with the State Education Ministers, alongwith other members.
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